BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC STATS

Ministry of Management Services

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gems6.gov.bc.ca Issue: 04-08 February 27, 2004

- **Retail sales were down 0.5% in December while wholesale sales jumped 2.0%**
- **BC led the country in drug-related offences in 2002 with 544 per 100,000 people**
- **Canadian real GDP expanded 0.9% in the fourth quarter**

Investment Intentions

- **Private and public sector establishments in the province plan to increase their spending on machinery, equipment and structures 5.3% (to $25.7 billion) during 2004.** Spending on both machinery (+5.5%) and structures (+5.2%) is expected to increase substantially during the year. Both private (+4.6%) and public (+8.3%) sector establishments are planning to increase their investment spending this year. Investment in residential housing projects is forecast to increase 8.4%, about half as much as it expanded in the two previous years. Wood manufacturers are forecasting a 40.4% increase in capital spending this year, but BC's paper industry expects to cut back 11.6%. The communications and utilities industry anticipates a 16.9% increase in investment this year.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Newfoundland (+10.5%) is forecast to lead the regions in terms of capital expenditures during 2004, followed closely by New Brunswick (+9.6%).** Yukon (+5.7%) and Manitoba (+5.4%) are the only other regions where spending is forecast to increase more than in BC. The expected increase at the national level is 3.1%. In Alberta, spending on machinery, equipment and structures is forecast to change only marginally (+0.4%) this year. Investment is expected to decline in both Saskatchewan (-4.4%) and Nunavut (-8.5%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

The Economy

- **Retail sales slumped (-0.5%, seasonally adjusted) in December.** Sales were down in every province, falling 1.2% at the national level. BC's 0.5% decline was modest compared to most other provinces. In Ontario, sales fell 2.0%, more than in any other province except PEI (-2.6%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Sales by wholesalers in BC advanced 2.0% (seasonally adjusted) in December.** The per cent increase in BC was the largest in the country. Canadian sales rose a more modest 0.8% and Ontario, with a 1.7% rise in sales, was the only other province to exceed the Canadian average. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

2003: The Year in Review

- **Sales by retailers in the province advanced 1.8% during 2003, posting the weakest gain since 1999, when sales rose 1.9%.** Retail sales had been increasing at about six percent a year since 2000.

  The slower growth reflected slumping sales in the automotive sector (-1.5%, including vehicle retailers as well as service stations), where advances during the last three years had been substantial, partly due to soaring gas prices, and partly because of consumer demand for new vehicles. Sales by other types of retailers advanced in 2003, led by a boom in the furniture retailing industry (+8.0%), and strong growth at drug (+4.8%) and food (+4.0%) stores. Clothing retailers posted a more modest gain of 2.5%. General merchandisers bucked the trend of weaker sales growth in 2002, with sales expanding 3.7%, twice as much as in the previous year (+1.9%). *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Wholesale sales expanded 4.0% in 2003, well down from the 7.8% jump experienced a year earlier.** The increase was achieved despite the confluence of several shocks, such as the rapid appreciation of the Canadian dollar, the SARS outbreak, the discovery of mad cow disease and subsequent trade embargos on Canadian beef and cattle, and the forest fires that raged through BC's interior.

  Nationally, sales rose 3.6%, with only Prince Edward Island (+10.9%), Alberta (+7.8%) and

Did you know...
More Canadian women would choose Martha Stewart (25%) than George Clooney (23%) as a gardening partner

Yukon (+4.8%) exceeding BC's growth rate.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

Agriculture

- **Farm cash receipts edged up (+0.4%) for the second year in a row in 2003.** Receipts from sales of livestock fell 3.9%, largely due to a sharp decline (-31.8%) in receipts from cattle sales, which had also tumbled (-10.8%) in 2002. However farm operators saw earnings from most other types of livestock products increase in 2003. Crop receipts were up 2.3% for the year. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

Drug Offences

- **BC had the highest rate of drug-related offences in the country in 2002, at 544 per 100,000 people.** This was almost double the national rate of 295 and is at least the 25th straight year where rates of drug offences in BC have exceeded the national average. By comparison, the next highest rate was 351 for Saskatchewan.

  Vancouver ranked second only to Thunder Bay (571) among census metropolitan areas for drug offence rates with 468 and Victoria was third in the country with a rate of 459. These numbers indicate that drug offences are an even larger problem in the more rural areas of the province since the BC rate is well above that of the two CMAs.

  BC was tied with Quebec with 29% of drug-related homicides between 1992 and 2002. With 58% of all heroin-related homicides and 33% of cocaine-related incidents, BC had the highest incidence of heroin and cocaine drug-related homicides.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada, catalogue no.85-002-XIE, Juristat: Trends in Drug Offences and the Role of Alcohol and Drugs in Crime, 2002.

Information and communication technology gap between small, large firms

- **Small firms are catching up with larger firms in the use of some technologies, but continue to lag behind in adopting others.** By 2002, 84% of small firms were using personal computers, up from 79% in 2000, while all large firms reported using PCs. E-mail usage by larger firms was virtually universal, while only 68% of small firms were using e-mail in 2002, although this is up significantly from only 56% in 2000. Very few (27%) smaller firms had their own website, compared to 77% of large firms.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada, catalogue no. 11-621-MIE, Information and communication technology use: Are small firms catching up?

The Nation

- **The Canadian economy grew 0.9% (seasonally adjusted) in the fourth quarter, its best performance in six quarters.** A 3.2% increase in exports was the main contributor to the strong growth, as international shipments rebounded after a four-quarter slump. Exports of industrial goods and materials led the way, jumping 8.3%.

  For the first time in five quarters, manufacturing experienced an increase in output (+2.0%). Part of this was a recovery from the electrical blackout in Ontario experienced in the third quarter. Final domestic demand edged up 0.3%, its weakest showing in two years, driven by flat consumer (+0.0%) and government (+0.1%) spending. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

- **Much of the fourth quarter economic growth in Canada occurred in December (+0.5% seasonally adjusted).** Goods-producing industries experienced robust growth of 0.9% with manufacturing (+1.4%) and mining, oil and gas extraction (+1.2%) leading the way. On the service side, GDP grew 0.3%. Arts, entertainment and recreation surged 2.4% and wholesale trade and finance and insurance both expanded 1.0%. Retail trade was down 1.0% from November.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Real GDP increased 1.7% in 2003, almost half the pace of growth in 2002.** Exports were the source of much of the slowdown, falling for the third consecutive year. On the positive side, consumer spending jumped 3.3%, driven by spending on services (+4.1%), although durable goods spending was also up (+2.3%) despite a decline in sales of motor vehicles. Low interest rates helped boost investment in residential construction a healthy 7.4%.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

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BC STATS, Box Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, BC V8W 9V1
Tel: (250) 387-0327 Fax: (250) 387-0329 Web: www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca E-mail: bcstats.infoline@gems6.gov.bc.ca

Infoline Report

Issue: 04-08
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Contact: Data Services (250) 387-0327
Originally published in *Business Indicators*, Issue 04-01. Annual Subscription$60 +GST

What Drives the Economies of B.C.'s Heartland?

British Columbia has a long history of economic dependence on the resource sectors. In fact, most communities were initially established in order to extract, process and export the abundant natural resources of the province. However, with the passage of time the economic base of some communities has expanded to include non-resource sectors. A question arises as to the extent to which communities continue to be dependent on resource extraction for their economic well-being.

BC STATS, with funding assistance from the Ministries of Forests, Sustainable Resource Management, Competition, Science and Enterprise and Health, recently completed a major study using data from the 2001 Census examining the economic dependency of 63 local areas in the province on various "driver" industries such as forestry, mining, fishing, tourism, high technology, etc. The study was intended to provide policy makers with a quantitative understanding of the regional economies and help in the estimation of the economic impacts of changes in those local economies.

The study utilized an "economic base" methodology. The fundamental premise is that the economy of a community can be represented by income flows that can be classified as "basic" or "non-basic", depending on where the income comes from. **Basic income** is assumed to flow into the community from the outside world, usually in response to goods and services produced in the community and exported from it. On the other hand, **non-basic income** is paid to individuals in the community for goods and services they provide to other individuals in the community. Aside from 2001 Census data on income by industry, other sources of information used to help make the allocation of community income to the basic/non-basic sectors included the 1999 BC Input-Output Model, Statistics Canada's 2000 Survey of Household Spending, income statistics for the 2001 tax year from CCRA, the Tourism BC 1995/96 BC Visitor Study and the Visitor' 89 Travel Survey.

The 12 Basic Driving Sectors

- *Forestry, including wood processing*
- *Mining, including mineral processing*
- *Fishing & Trapping, including processing*
- *Agriculture, including processing*
- *Tourism*
- *High Technology Industries*
- *the Public Sector, including education, health care and other government services*
- *Construction*
- *Film Production and Sound Recording*
- *Other Employment Income*
- *Transfer Payments*
- *Other Non-employment Income*

The local areas were selected to cover the entire province with the exception of the Greater Vancouver area[1]. Since there were 63 local areas defined, and 12 sectors, the individual dependencies can be arrayed in a large table having 63 rows and 12 columns. This table appears as an Appendix to this article.

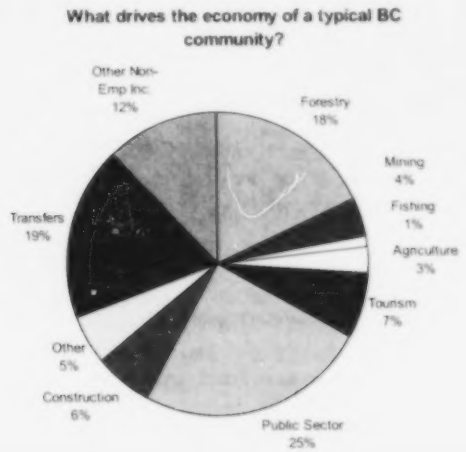
As well as providing useful descriptive information about the various regions of the province in the form of income dependencies, diversity indices, and forest vulnerability indices, the study was also able to develop employment multipliers that can be used to estimate the local impacts of changes in the basic industries. The complete report, entitled *British Columbia's Heartland at the Dawn of the 21st Century - 2001 Economic Dependencies and Impact Ratios for 63*

[1] The Greater Vancouver area refers to the GVRD as defined in 1991. Hence, the communities of Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge are included in the analysis.

Local Areas, is available by accessing the <**New Releases**> section of the BC STATS web site at: http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca.

What drives the economy of a typical BC community?

The answer to this question is shown in the following chart.



The percentages in this representation should be treated with some caution. They are the simple average shares of 63 local economies. They are not necessarily the average dependencies for the whole province, or even for the rural parts of the province. Nevertheless they do illustrate how important Forestry, the Public Sector, and Transfer Payments are to most communities in the province. (Note that High Tech and Film industries do not appear in this chart because they comprise less than 1% of the total.)

Communities that are close to the "typical" are Ladysmith, Duncan and Sunshine Coast. British Columbia communities that, from this perspective, are quite atypical are Fernie (with a strong Mining dependence) and Port Hardy (very dependent on Forestry).

Communities rely heavily on non-employment income

The income that flows into a community can come from sources other than employment. For example, transfer payments from senior governments, such as welfare payments, Old Age Security pensions, Guaranteed Income Supplements, Canada Pension Plan, Employment Insurance benefits, Federal Child Tax benefits, etc. all represent income flows that help sustain a community. Other examples of non-employment income include investment income, such as dividends and interest; retirement pensions, superannuation, annuities, alimony, etc. Together, these non-employment income sources represent almost 1/3 (on average) of the income flowing into a community and can play a significant role in providing stability for communities during weak economic times.

Communities within BC with the highest dependence on these non-employment sources of income are the retirement centres of the Gulf Islands and Parksville-Qualicum (52%). At 10%, Fort Nelson has the lowest dependence on non-employment income, or alternatively, the highest dependence on income derived from employment.

Public Sector is also important

A significant part of virtually every community's economic dependence is on what is broadly called the "Public Sector", which includes all levels of government (federal, provincial and local) and the services provided by those governments, including education, health, policing and municipal services.

Not surprisingly, the public sector is quite important in the Victoria area (41%) and its neighbour the Sooke-Port Renfrew area (42%) from which many provincial government employees commute. However, the public sector is also an important source of income for many of the sparsely populated regions of the province such as Stewart (41%), Stikine (42%) and Central Coast (39%).

Forestry still is king in many areas

In many areas of the province, forestry is still the major economic driver of the economy. On average, forestry accounts for about 18% of community economic activity and is second only to the public sector as a generator of income. However, unlike the public sector, forestry is much more polarized within the province. Communities like Port Hardy (49%) are heavily dependent on forestry while places such as Victoria receive very little (1%) income directly from forestry.

Aside from the polarization of forestry within the province, the incomes generated from forestry tend to be higher on average than other industries such as tourism or the public sector, which means that the secondary, or induced, effects of forest sector income is more important to the local economy than these other sectors.

Given that forestry still packs an economic wallop in many communities throughout the province the vulnerability of these communities on the forest sector is an important issue, particularly in light of the fluctuations that this industry experiences. To examine this issue, BC STATS has created a *Forest Vulnerability Index* (FVI), which measures dependence on the forest sector in combination with the extent to which a community possesses a diversified economy. A community will be particularly vulnerable if its dependence on the forest sector is high while its diversity is low.

Within the province, some of the highest FVI's are found on north and western Vancouver Island (e.g. Port Hardy), and in the central interior of the province including communities of Vanderhoof, Quesnel, Smithers, Hazelton, Prince George, North Thompson and Burns Lake. Not surprisingly, the lowest vulnerability to fluctuations in the forest sector is in Victoria and the Gulf Islands.

Tourism is small but a growing driver in many local economies

Tourism plays a smaller role in the economies of many rural BC communities than many people would think. There are two main reasons for this outcome. One is that Tourism is an industry that, in general, does not support a lot of local indirect activity—for example, the souvenirs that tourists buy are not usually locally made, or the food which they eat in restaurants is not usually locally grown. The second reason is that some jobs in the Tourism sector are entry-level positions requiring minimal training, and the wages reflect this fact. Thus, its local impact on the non-basic sector can be relatively low.

However, there are communities where tourism is playing an increasingly important role in the local economy. This, in turn, is supporting a transition toward greater diversity in the economic base. Communities where tourism is a significant driver of the local economy include the well-known tourist areas of the Squamish-Whistler-Pemberton corridor, Invermere, and Kent-Harrison. However, tourism also plays a significant and growing role in the economies of Golden, Revelstoke and McBride-Valemount. In the case of Revelstoke, Tourism has increased in importance by almost three fold from 6% in 1991 to 16% in 2001.

How diverse are the economies of BC's communities?

Though a community with one strong industry may be better off than one with a number of weak ones, there is an intuitive appeal to the notion that a diversified economic base will provide more stability in volatile economic times. The dependencies developed in this study were used to examine the economic diversity of each of the subject communities by creating a *diversity index* ranging from 0 if the area was entirely dependent on one sector, to 100 if it was equally dependent on each of the 12 sectors.

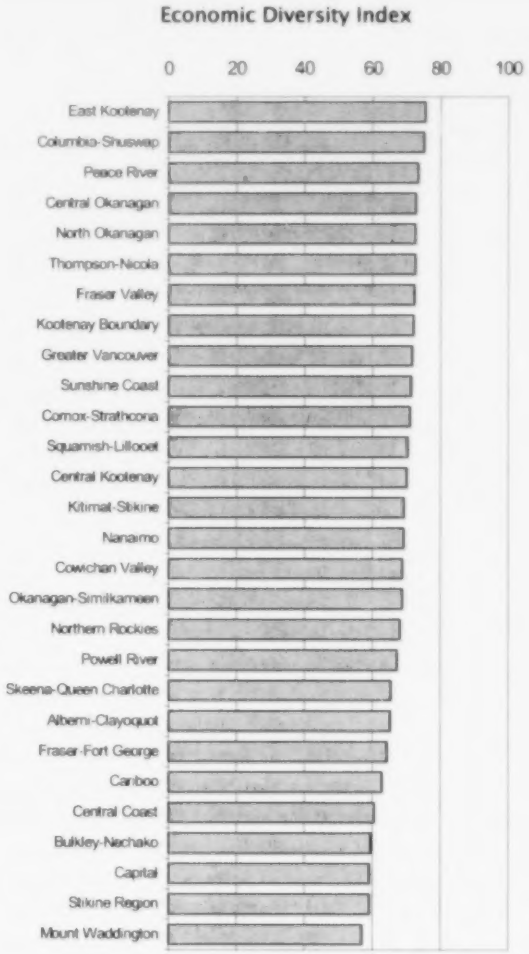
In 2001, the BC communities with the most diverse economies included:

Ashcroft:	Forestry, Mining, Tourism, Agriculture & Public Sector
Bute Inlet	Fishing, Tourism, Forestry & Public Sector
Spallumcheen	Forestry, Agriculture, Construction & Public Sector
Cranbrook-Kimberly	Forestry, Mining, Tourism & Public Sector
Invermere	Foresty, Tourism, Construction & Public Sector
Dawson Creek	Forestry, Mining, Public Sector

At the other end of the diversity spectrum, the local areas with the least diverse economies in 2001 were:

Port Hardy	Forestry & Public Sector
Vanderhoof	Forestry & Public Sector
Quesnel	Forestry & Public Sector
Victoria	Public Sector
Stikine	Public Sector & Construction

The same database and methodology can be used to develop estimates of the diversity of the economy of each regional district in the province. The following chart shows how those diversities vary, from the most diverse – the East Kootenay Regional District – to the least diverse – Mount Waddington.



BC Stats, Box 9410 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, BC V8W 9V1
Tel: (250) 387-0327 Fax: (250) 387-0329 Web: www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca E-mail: bcstats.infoline@gems6.gov.bc.ca

What about changes between 1991 and 2001?

A natural question to ask is how have the dependencies changed over the last decade? One way to answer this is to compute the mean dependency across all 63 local areas for each period that BC STATS has conducted a study. The results of this calculation are shown below.

Mean Income Dependencies for all 63 Local Areas

Year	2001	1996	1991
Forestry	18	21	18
Mining	4	4	6
Fishing &Trapping	1	2	1
Agriculture & Food	3	3	3
Tourism	7	7	5
Public Admin.	25	24	19
Other	12	12	15
Trans. Payments	18	16	13
Other Non-Emp Inc	12	10	20

Perhaps not too surprisingly, averaged across the whole province, these figures show considerable stability. Community dependence on Forestry appears to have grown from 1991 to 1996 but then fell back again to 1991 levels in 2001. Mining and mineral processing dropped by 33% from 1991 to 1996 and has remained steady thereafter. Fishing and trapping increased in 1996 but then fell back to its 1991 level in 2001. Dependence on Agriculture and food processing has remained very steady over the entire decade. The dependence of BC communities on Tourism grew about 40% from 1991 to 1996, but has remained stable thereafter. Dependence on public sector activities has grown over the decade, from 19% in 1991 to 25% in 2001.

Areas within the province where some of the largest changes in dependency have occurred include Stewart where dependence on Mining has gone from 43% in 1991 to only 4% in 2001, Squamish where Tourism has doubled from 14% in 1991 to 29% in 2001, and Prince Rupert where Fishing had dropped from 18% to 11% over the 10 year period. These findings mirror what many who live in these communities already knew—the drop of mining activities in the Stewart area, the development of Whistler as a world-class tourist destination, the restriction on fish stocks on the west coast, etc. However, what this study does do is quantify the changes that have occurred at the community level, which can help decision makers better understand the economic impacts associated with the policy choices faced.

Appendix

Percent Income Dependencies (After Tax Incomes, 2001)

	Forestry	Mining & Min Proc	Fish-ing	Agric. & Food	Tourism	High Tech	Public Sector	Const	Film Prod	Other	Trans. Payments	Other non-emp inc
VANCOUVER ISLAND/COAST												
1 Gulf Islands	1	0	1	2	7	2	18	9	2	5	20	32
2 Victoria	1	0	0	1	6	4	41	4	0	6	16	20
3 Sooke-Port Renfrew	3	0	2	1	6	1	42	8	0	9	18	11
4 Duncan	18	1	0	2	4	1	26	5	0	5	19	18
5 Lake Cowichan	31	0	0	1	5	0	22	4	0	1	23	14
6 Ladysmith	19	0	1	2	3	2	25	4	0	5	22	17
7 Nanaimo	11	0	1	1	5	2	28	5	0	9	21	18
8 Parksville-Qualicum	8	1	1	1	7	0	18	7	0	4	25	27
9 Alberni	31	0	2	2	8	0	22	3	0	2	18	12
10 Courtenay-Comox	11	1	2	3	6	0	30	5	0	3	20	18
11 Campbell River	29	4	2	2	7	0	20	5	0	2	16	11
12 Bute Inlet	5	3	12	3	11	0	22	7	0	2	18	17
13 Powell River	27	2	1	1	4	0	19	4	0	2	21	17
14 Alert Bay	8	0	15	1	8	1	32	4	0	1	24	6
15 Port Hardy	49	1	4	2	8	0	19	1	0	0	10	5
16 Central Coast	13	0	7	1	6	0	39	5	0	1	22	5
MAINLAND/SOUTHWEST (Excluding GVRD)												
17 Hope-Fraser Canyon	14	2	0	1	11	0	22	7	2	5	25	11
18 Chilliwack	6	1	0	7	4	0	28	7	0	11	21	15
19 Kent-Harrison	6	1	0	6	12	1	28	6	0	5	21	13
20 Matsqui-Abbottsford	8	1	0	11	2	1	26	9	0	13	18	12
21 Pitt Meadows-Maple Ridge	7	2	0	3	2	3	29	10	1	19	14	10
22 Mission	12	1	0	6	3	1	27	9	1	12	18	10
23 Sunshine Coast	19	1	2	1	5	1	21	7	0	3	20	19
24 Squamish	12	1	0	0	29	1	21	11	1	7	9	7
25 Lillooet	20	0	1	3	6	0	32	7	0	6	16	9
THOMPSON-OKANAGAN												
26 Princeton	28	1	0	1	5	0	18	6	0	2	25	14
27 Oliver-Osoyoos	6	1	0	12	6	0	17	4	0	3	33	18
28 Penticton	5	2	0	3	6	0	26	5	0	6	25	20
29 Ashcroft	18	8	0	6	8	0	18	5	0	4	22	12
30 Merritt	24	5	0	4	6	0	27	5	0	1	20	8
31 Kamloops	10	6	0	2	6	0	29	6	0	10	18	13
32 North Thompson	39	1	0	2	8	0	15	4	0	2	17	11
33 Peachland	5	3	0	3	6	2	22	7	0	11	21	19
34 Kelowna	5	1	0	5	6	2	24	7	0	12	20	18
35 Vernon	10	1	0	3	6	1	24	6	0	11	23	16
36 Spallumcheen	13	2	0	9	3	0	19	8	1	8	23	14
37 Salmon Arm	11	2	0	3	6	1	18	8	0	9	24	19
38 Golden	25	1	0	1	17	0	16	8	0	10	14	8
39 Revelstoke	21	0	0	0	16	0	17	5	1	14	15	11

	Forestry	Mining & Min Proc	Fish-ing	Agric. & Food	Tourism	High Tech	Public Sector	Const	Film Prod	Other	Trans. Pay-ments	Other non-emp inc
KOOTENAY												
40 Fernie	8	41	0	1	9	1	15	4	0	1	12	8
41 Cranbrook-Kimberley	14	9	0	1	8	0	25	6	0	5	18	14
42 Invermere	18	2	0	1	17	0	18	14	0	1	14	15
43 Castlegar-Arrow Lakes	25	6	0	0	3	1	23	9	0	3	18	13
44 Nelson	13	2	0	1	7	2	30	8	0	2	19	15
45 Creston	10	2	0	7	5	0	23	5	0	2	29	16
46 Grand Forks-Greenwood	25	1	0	4	6	0	20	5	0	3	23	13
47 Trail-Rossland	4	29	0	0	3	0	23	4	0	4	18	15
CARIBOO												
48 Williams Lake	30	2	0	3	6	0	24	6	0	3	16	9
49 Quesnel	43	1	0	2	5	0	21	3	0	2	16	8
50 Prince George	31	1	0	1	4	1	28	6	0	7	13	8
51 McBride-Valemount	30	0	0	2	15	1	18	4	0	5	16	10
NORTH COAST												
52 Queen Charlotte Island	33	0	4	1	7	0	30	5	0	4	11	6
53 Prince Rupert	23	0	11	0	6	0	30	3	0	3	18	5
54 Kitimat-Terrace	19	20	0	0	5	0	26	6	0	4	13	7
55 Hazelton	29	3	1	1	3	0	32	2	0	0	24	5
56 Stewart	9	7	3	0	5	0	41	6	0	2	22	5
NECHAKO												
57 Smithers-Houston	34	5	0	3	5	1	26	4	0	2	12	7
58 Burns Lake	37	1	0	2	5	0	25	5	0	1	15	10
59 Vanderhoof	44	5	0	2	2	0	21	5	0	1	14	5
60 Stikine	2	4	1	0	8	0	42	20	0	3	14	6
NORTHEAST												
61 Dawson Creek	16	17	0	5	4	0	25	6	0	6	15	6
62 Fort St. John	7	32	0	4	6	0	19	10	0	7	10	5
63 Ft. Nelson	31	19	0	1	8	0	17	6	0	7	6	4

Source: BC STATS, British Columbia's Heartland at the Dawn of the 21st Century – 2001 Economic Dependencies and Impact Ratios for 63 Local Areas, January 2004.

Statistics Canada's Survey Skills Workshops

Census Workshop – Victoria

The Census of Population is the most comprehensive source of data on the demographic, social and economic characteristics of Canadians. This introductory workshop is designed to acquaint new users with the wealth of information from this resource. The instructor will guide the class through the types of data available, their geographic organization, and the wide range of publications, electronic products, and services based on the Census.

Workshop Topics

Census Overview

- Background to the Census
- Content of the 2001 Census
- How the Census data can be used
- Products and Services

Census Variables

- Income, ethno-cultural, language, immigration, labour force, etc.

Census Universes

- Population, families, households, dwellings

Census Geographies

- Census metropolitan areas, census agglomerations, census subdivisions, census tracts, block-faces, etc.

Date & Location

March 19, 2004
8:30am – 4:30pm
Harbour Towers Hotel
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Early bird Rate: $150 + GST (register before Mar. 5th)
Regular Fee: $175 + GST

Space is limited!

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Registrations are guaranteed once payment is received. Fees will be refunded (subject to a $75 administrative charge) if intention to cancel is received in writing at least 3 business days before the start of the workshop. Substitutions are permitted with prior notice.

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February 27, 2004

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BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Oct 1/03	% change on one year ago
BC	4,158.6	0.8
Canada	31,714.6	0.8
GDP and INCOME		
(BC - at market prices)	2002	% change on one year ago
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	135,552	2.7
GDP *($ 1997 millions)*	128,151	2.4
GDP *($ 1997 per Capita)*	31,143	1.5
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1997 per Capita)*	19,576	0.1
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Dec	2,741	-2.3
Merchandise Exports - Dec	2,306	0.9
Retail Sales - Dec	3,409	-0.5
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		12-month avg
(all items - 1992=100)	Jan '04	% change
BC	120.8	2.0
Canada	122.9	2.5
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change on
(seasonally adjusted)	Jan '04	prev. month
Labour Force - BC	2,236	0.6
Employed - BC	2,072	0.0
Unemployed - BC	163	8.1
		Dec '03
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	7.3	6.8
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	7.4	7.4
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Feb 25/04	Feb 26/03
Prime Business Rate	4.25	4.50
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	4.30	4.90
- 5 year	5.80	6.60
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Feb 25/04	Feb 26/03
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.3370	1.4935
US $ *(reciprocal of the closing rate)*	0.7489	0.6699
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE		% change on
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	Jan '04	one year ago
BC	676.81	-0.4
Canada	673.55	2.3

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

BC College and Institute Student Outcomes

The BC College and Institute Student Outcomes (CISO) Survey Project is an annual province-wide survey of former college, university college, and institute students. Since 1988, this survey has asked former students to evaluate their educational experiences and to talk about their employment outcomes, further education, and personal development. Survey findings provide a rich source of information for post-secondary institutions, the Ministry of Advanced Education, students, and the general public.

Visit the BC Student Outcomes website:

http://outcomes.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/

Released this week by BC STATS

- Business Indicators, February 2004
- Current Statistics, February 2004

Next week

- Quarterly Regional Statistics, 4th Quarter 2003

BC STATS, Ministry of Management Services, Box 9410 Stn Prov Govt, Victoria, B.C. V8W 9V1
Tel: (250) 387-0327 Fax: (250) 387-0329 Web: www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca E-mail: BC.Stats@gems8.gov.bc.ca